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International Trade Professional Curriculum System Innovation and Personnel Training Model Exploration

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Abstract

With the rapid development of China's foreign trade, now many universities have set up the International Trade major one after another; The University must be based on our own resources superiority to have the scientific orientation of personnel training objectives, which can make trained students meet needs of society and enterprises better. This paper based on the characteristics of International Trade major in University proposes to take the personnel training model combining with "Work, Certificate and Learning" as the objective, proceeding the orientation of professional personnel and settings of certificate testing module and teaching module, to construct the curriculum system from the innovation of theoretical and practical teaching.

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Keywords: International Trade Major; Curriculum System; Personnel Training Model

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of international economy, especially China entering the WTO, Commerce Department has cancelled the examination and approval system of foreign trade management rights of business entities, replacing with the filling and registration system; more and more enterprises can directly engage in foreign trade, so colleges and universities take this opportunity to set up International Trade major like mushrooms, committing to cultivating large quantities of high quality international trade personnel. However, according to surveys, in recent years graduate students in International Trade major are not very optimistic about employment, even leading to the phenomenon of supply exceeding demand. One of the reasons is that in 2007 the global financial crisis triggered by the U.S. subprime mortgage crisis, has led to slow global economic growth, making International Trade majors experience wintry employment; the other reason is that small high-level talents among university graduates in International Economy and Trade major are really familiar with international economy and trade activities, not able to really adapt to job requirements, with substandard vocational skills. To aim at the current severe situation, we need to explore International Economy and Trade professional curriculum system innovation and

personnel training model, so as to make international trade talents cultivated in our university possess core competitiveness and stand out among many candidates.

2. Problems in International Trade Professional Personnel Training

In combination with the practical situation in the International Trade major in our university, in the issue of the international trade professional personnel training exists the following problems:

2.1 The curriculum design is too macro and general, lack of specificity

According to the survey among several domestic universities, it is found that International Trade majors' courses are very broad, like finance, trade, accounting, economics, law, management, and English, but students' learning contents and mastered skills could not reach a certain depth, which causes graduates often can not form their own competitive advantages.

2.2 Disconnection between the curriculum system and practice is available

It demonstrates that the course setting focuses on systematic and integrate professional theoretical knowledge, lack of the training of students' vocational ability, making the vocational ability disconnect with requirements of the foreign personnel market; through surveys of training programs among various colleges and universities, it is found that teaching systems among many universities focus on theory, while lack practice; poor manipulative ability is the common assessment of employing units for graduates of International Trade majors. During the current reform of training program in our university, we have constructed "International Trade Simulation Practice Platform", "Foreign Trade Practice Platform", "Foreign Trade Documents Practice Platform", "Teaching System of Foreign Trade Documents", "Foreign Trade Practice Teaching System", and "E-commerce Simulation Platform", etc., enhancing students' practice hands-on capacity and enhancing students' perceptual knowledge on international trade job itself.

2.3 Weak external training base is difficult to train students' ability of business operations

Our university actively purchases Documents Teaching Software, Trade Practices Teaching Software, and Import and Export Trade Software for Simulated Practice and so on. However, defects of rigid cases and fixed patterns are available, with significant limitations. While some foreign trade enterprises often can only accept a small amount of students to obtain practical training, and even refuse students to participate in real businesses; at best, they will only carry out some visiting practical study, resulting in International Trade major difficult to establish external professional training base.

3. The Construction of the Personnel Training Model Combining with "Work, Certificate and Learning"

As general universities, the teaching of International Economy and Trade Department should be positioned to train a large number of international trade oriented talents for the socio-economic construction and development. While university since the establishment of International Economy and Trade undergraduate major, has orientated the training objectives to train practical professional personnel who master solid basic theory in the aspect of international economy and trade, are familiar with related laws and regulations, and possess basic skills to engage in foreign economy and trade work and strong operational capacity, as well as meet the work of modern commerce. According to surveys of foreign personnel requirements and the employment orientation of International Trade major graduates, it is found that the employment posts for international trade majors mainly include: Foreign Sales Staff, Foreign Trade Salesman, International Trade Salesman, Foreign Trade Merchandiser, Freight Forwarding Clerk, Foreign Trade Documentation Specialist, Staff Applying for Inspection, as well as Staff Applying to

Customs, etc.; three to five years later, it is promoted to be an International Business Division, Business Department Manager, and finally as a General Manager. While most students after graduation directly engage in the posts of Foreign Trade Documentation Specialist, Foreign Trade Salesman, Staff Applying for Inspection, Staff Applying to Customs, and Freight Forwarding Clerk. These posts are just the major employment objectives of international trade students cultivated in our university. While these positions all require the corresponding Professional Qualification Certificate, going to their posts with certificates. Besides, a specific job in enterprises in each industry corresponds to a Professional Qualification Certificate. Its certificate configurations are as follows:

TABLE I. Certificate Configurations

Posts	Professional Qualification Certificate
International Commerce Documentation Specialist	Qualification Certificate for International Commerce Documentation Specialist
Foreign Trade Merchandiser	Qualification Certificate for International Commerce Merchandiser
Staff Applying for Inspection	Qualification Certificate for Staff Applying for Inspection
Staff Applying to Customs	Qualification Certificate for Staff Applying to Customs
Freight Forwarding Staff	Qualification Certificate for International Freight Forwarding Staff
Foreign Trade Salesman	Qualification Certificate for Foreign Trade Salesman
International Trade Salesman	Qualification Certificate for International Trade Salesman
Export Sales Staff, International Business Division	Qualification Certificate for Export Sales Staff

It can be seen that, in order to achieve the training objectives of the university and assist students to get a job smoothly, it must make students realize that obtaining the corresponding certificate is a ticket to the job.

Constructing a scientific personnel training mode is the key to achieve the personnel training objectives, taking work as the goal, taking certificates as the bridge and taking teaching as the channel, setting certificates according to the work, and setting learning contents according to certificates, combining with "Work, Certificate and Learning", as well as making the vocational certificates testing items throughout training programs.

4. The Construction of the Creative Curriculum System

The optimization of the curriculum system needs constantly adjusting with the development of society economy; meanwhile it is also a systematic project, on the basis of correct personnel training mode, demanding the supporting of teachers force, teaching conditions and teaching means.

4.1 Proceed the orientation of professional personnel and establish post group

First of all, all colleges and universities need establishing the orientation of personnel training; then, establish the occupational testing items corresponding to professional posts, and regard the obtaining of the qualification certificate as an important reference to verify whether the quality of the personnel training in compliance with standards. Post groups for graduates of International Trade major to face mainly are Foreign Trade Documentation Specialist, Foreign Trade Salesman, Staff Applying for Inspection, Staff Applying to Customs, and Freight Forwarding Clerk. Groups could be subdivided into three major post groups, namely, documents post group (including Documentation Specialist, Staff Applying for Inspection and Staff Applying to Customs), freight forwarding post group and sales post group.

4.2 Construct the corresponding certificate testing module

According to demands of foreign trade industry for professionals and the sub-post group, the above post groups of International Trade major can be divided based on the required ability and qualification certificates; the certificate testing module can be separated into three major modules, qualification certificates in documents post group mainly include Qualification Certificate for International Commerce Documentation Specialist, Qualification Certificate for Foreign Trade Merchandiser, Qualification Certificate for Staff Applying for Inspection, and Qualification Certificate for Staff Applying to Customs; for contents of these qualification certificates possess large connections, we can put a few certificates into a module that is the documents module, respectively followed by the module of qualification certificate of international freight forwarding staff and the module of qualification certificate of salesman.

4.3 Construct the teaching module

We have to break the traditional curriculum system and reconstruct the work-and-certificate-oriented teaching module. During the entire four-year training program, it should include all standards and contents of qualification certificate examination into the professional teaching program, and continuously improve in accordance with standards of qualification certificate examination, continue to adjust and improve the training program, and organize teaching and training activities, as well as assess students' academic performance corresponding to standards of qualification certificate examination, thus to achieve that students not only complete their studies, also they possess the ability to smoothly pass the examination for the qualification certificate and to engage in work of various professional posts. Those students who obtain "One diploma with a variety of certificates", regarding to the employment issue, possess obvious competitive advantage. To this end, we focus on different employment directions and different certificate testing modules to open relevant professional courses with targets; each professional course meets the requirements of the qualification certificate examination. In the documents module, we mainly set up Practices of Applying to Customs, Practices of Applying for Inspection, Documents Practices, International Trade Practices, Import and Export Business Simulation, Business English Correspondence, and Declaration Merchandise. In the freight forwarding module, we open International Cargo Transportation and Insurance and Business English. In the sales module, we focus to establish courses like International Trade Theory, International Trade Practices, Business Negotiations, Business Etiquette, International Marketing, Import and Export Business Simulation, Business English Correspondence, and Business English. Thus it truly achieves the perfect combination of "Work, Certificate and Learning". During the construction of teaching module, we need to focus on solving the following several problems.

1) Stand out practical teaching, and optimize curriculum settings.

Appropriately increase applicable and practical curriculum and reduce purely theoretical courses. We purchase a large number of corresponding simulations training software besides establishing laboratory of international trade, to strengthen students' practical operational skills; in addition we try to establish good cooperative relationship with a number of practical enterprises, so that students can have a more regular practice field.

2) Focus on the curriculum development.

For the correlation between the contents of International Trade professional courses is very large, there is the phenomenon of duplication in some contents of specialized courses. For example, when teachers select teaching materials to prepare for classes, they need to interchange with other teachers for mutual learning, and try to avoid the duplication in contents and make teaching materials with different focuses. For instance, courses of International Clearing and Documents Practices have related contents, thus it requires teachers to consult about setting up the syllabus based on the division of labor after getting teaching materials, so as to reduce the occurrence of the phenomenon with repeated teaching contents. Regarding to the core courses of International Trade major, like "International Trade Practices", "Foreign Trade English Correspondence," and "Documents Practices " may be appropriately increased teaching hours and training hours, meanwhile proceeding the systematic innovation in the aspects of teaching

materials, teaching contents, teaching methods, teaching facilities, and assessment ways, etc. and implementing institutionalization and standardization.

3) *Develop bilingual teaching to enhance students' foreign language level and to improve the quality of teachers.*

International Economy and Trade major is a professional education with strong international interoperability and extraversion, however, International Trade major in most Chinese universities is taught in Chinese; English teaching is generally limited to English classes, so trained personnel are often unitary. Adopting bilingual teaching can make professional knowledge mix together with foreign languages, which is helpful to train complex and international talents with wealth of professional knowledge and good command of foreign languages, also proficient in WTO rules, to meet needs of enterprises for characteristic talents in international trade. Teachers as the core of teaching, teachers' quality directly determines the quality of teaching; the implementation of bilingual teaching can not be separated from high-quality teachers. It is worthy of feeling pleased that, at present many universities attach great importance to bilingual teaching; some schools even send some teachers to go abroad for short-term training. However, teachers' training for bilingual teaching should not be interrupted. It can also organize in usual time training courses and seminars and so on activities, requiring all teachers who have bilingual classes to participate in; on the one hand it is to achieve the exchange of experiences, on the other hand it provides an environment for English dialogues. Besides, it may employ several foreign scholars to train teachers who have bilingual teaching on a regular basis.

In addition, bilingual teaching will undoubtedly increase the workload of teachers in class preparation and the difficulty of organizing the classroom teaching. While the evaluation system is still the same as that of ordinary courses, it may discourage teachers' enthusiasm in some extent to open bilingual teaching lessons. Under such circumstance, the appropriate incentive system must be developed to promote teachers to reform the bilingual teaching. Meanwhile, it is recommended to develop relevant assessment system for the effectiveness of bilingual teaching, to improve the efficiency of bilingual teaching. Besides, the bilingual teaching should form a curriculum system. In order to achieve the goal of bilingual teaching, depending alone one or two courses to set up bilingual teaching is not much useful. It should select relevant courses to form a system of bilingual teaching courses, so that students enable to have the appropriate learning environment, also it is helpful to obtain the coherence and consistency of knowledge.

4) *Implement the system of "Double Certificates", to improve students' real employability.*

Establishing the credit system of vocational certificates, as long as obtaining the appropriate qualification certificates, it can exempt the corresponding elective courses, and directly count into credits; and implementing the two-certificate system of academic certificates and professional qualification certificates can not only enhance students' motivation for learning, but also make students possess necessary theoretical knowledge and master basic skills of vocational operation, thereby enhancing students' employment competitiveness.

5. Conclusions

This paper discusses the exploration of the personnel training module in combination with "Work, Certificate and Learning", and researches the innovation of the curriculum system for International Trade major in the aspects of theory and practice. Through discussing the formation of the curriculum system, the courses are set up in accordance with the standards and contents of the qualification certificate examination, and separated into several main modules. All this to be done is to train students to obtain professional knowledge and master practical vocational skills, so as to allow trained talents to meet the demands of society and enterprises.

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